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Sanchez: More troops not needed in Iraq

BY STEVEN R. HURST

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — The commander of U.S. forces in Iraq said there was no need for more U.S. troops in the country and blamed continuing violence on insufficient intelligence and the lack of cooperation from the Iraqi people.

Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez said, however, he would welcome forces from other countries as a sign of international commitment to the pacification and rebuilding of Iraq.

A key official in the administration of President Bush has said the White House is now open to the possibility of establishing a U.N.-endorsed multinational force in Iraq if it is headed by an American commander.

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage acknowledged that the idea is one of many being weighed by the administration as it attempts to deal

General blames violence on lack of help from Iraqis

with the continuing violence almost four months after Bush declared an end to major combat operations.

Speaking to reporters in Baghdad, Sanchez hewed to the Pentagon line that there are plenty of troops in the country.

"Putting more soldiers on the ground is not going to solve the problem if I don't have the intelligence to act on," Sanchez said at a news conference.

What was needed, he said, was an Iraqi civil defense force and more Iraqi police to "establish linkages to the Iraqi people ... to get the information that we need," Sanchez said. Earlier this summer, the U.S. military announced plans to train about 7,000 Iraqis to

serve in a civil defense force to guard important facilities and patrol with U.S. soldiers.

Sanchez said 185 civil defense trainees were ready to graduate and begin serving.

France's foreign minister on Thursday called for the deployment of a U.N.-run international force in Iraq, arguing that merely increasing troops under U.S. and British control would not be enough.

Dominique de Villepin, a strident opponent of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, also called for the establishment of a provisional government in Baghdad backed up by the United Nations.

Sanchez repeated U.S. assertions that American troops had foreign fighters in custody, but refused to give any details about where they had come from or how they were captured.

He also said casualty figures since the end of major conflict, declared over by President Bush on May 1, were "about what we would expect to get in this kind of conflict."

Since then, 143 U.S. soldiers have died — five more than during the war itself.

U.S. considering granting U.N. leadership role in Iraq

BY PETER SLEVIN
AND VERNON LOEB

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — Searching for ways to expand international forces in Iraq, the Bush administration for the first time is exploring the creation of a multinational military force under United Nations leadership, but still subordinate to U.S. commanders, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said.

The solution would be designed to give the United Nations a greater role in the Iraqi occupation in return for increased support of the U.S.-dominated peacekeeping mission, administration officials said.

Without a strong U.N. mandate, a number of countries have so far been reluctant to send troops.

U.S. officials emphasized Wednesday that the concept is one of several under discussion as the administration seeks stronger military and financial backing for Iraqi reconstruction without surrendering American control. There is no agreement yet within the administration, and neither the Pentagon nor the White House has signed off.

The Bush administration is facing growing pressure to resolve Iraq's continuing instability at a time when thinly-stretched U.S. forces are struggling to halt guerrilla assaults, violent crime and a recent spurt of deadly terrorist attacks. Armitage's remarks to regional reporters, released Wednesday, reflect a difficult effort to share the burden more widely.

While some U.S. politicians, including Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Sen. Joe Biden, D-Del., have urged the deployment of thousands more U.S. soldiers, others have sought ways to limit the exposure of American troops, who have been killed at the rate of one every two days since May 1.

The administration's willingness to consider creation of multinational peacekeeping force under a U.N. mandate could signal an important shift, since Defense Secretary Donald Rums-

feld and other senior officials have thus far been reluctant to cede any U.S. authority over reconstruction and stability operations.

Informal discussions on a possible U.N. resolution are under way in New York and key capitals. Secretary of State Colin Powell is leading this effort as he did last spring's unsuccessful bid for U.N. Security Council approval of the Iraq invasion, officials said Wednesday. Draft language designed to attract more troops and money could be circulated next week, said diplomats who cautioned that a solution seems distant.

At the Security Council, key officials from France, Germany and Russia who opposed the war in Iraq remain deeply skeptical about authorizing a new multinational force that would operate under U.S. command. They believe the United States should yield greater political and economic control to the United Nations and other governments that contribute troops.

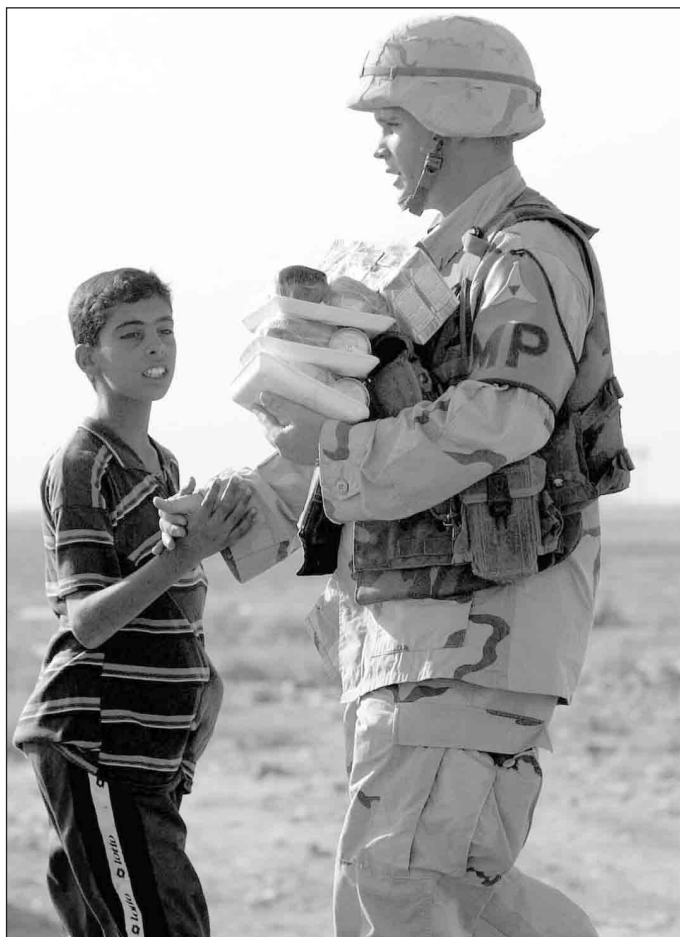
Some council diplomats also want the United States to cede a measure of political authority inside Iraq. They have called on the administration to set a firm timetable for the establishment of a representative government and a schedule for the withdrawal of U.S. and British forces who waged the war that toppled Saddam Hussein.

Rumsfeld favors an increase in foreign troops, but has long been opposed to a formal U.N. command. He declared as recently as Monday, "I think that's not going to happen." He offered no indication of how he might react to a hybrid arrangement in which the Pentagon's overall control of military operations would be preserved.

Armitage became the first administration official to suggest publicly that U.S. and U.N. officials are exploring the possibility of an adjustment to the force structure. He described the concept as "a multinational force under U.N. leadership, but the American would be the U.N. commander."

Staff writer Colum Lynch at the United Nations contributed to this report

It's not all bad



ROB GRIFFITH/AP

A U.S. soldier shakes hands with an Iraqi boy Wednesday at a military checkpoint near Basrah, about 370 miles south of Baghdad, Iraq.

2 U.S. soldiers killed in attacks

BY D'ARCY DORAN
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD, Iraq — Two more U.S. soldiers were killed in combat Tuesday, and the relief agency Oxfam became the fourth major international organization to pull some or all of its foreign staff out of Iraq because of the increasing danger.

The two U.S. soldiers killed Wednesday died in separate attacks in Baghdad and a city just to the west, the military reported. A third soldier was reported to have died of a non-hostile gunshot wound in a separate incident.

One soldier was killed and three were wounded in a roadside bombing in Fallujah, west of Baghdad. The military said the attack occurred at 7:10 a.m. The dead soldier was from the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, the military said. It provided no other details.

The second death came in a roadside bomb attack on a military convoy at 7:45 a.m. in Baghdad. The soldier killed was with the 205th Military Intelligence Brigade. No other details were given.

The deaths brought to 281 the number of soldiers killed since the war began on March 20. Since President Bush declared major combat over on May 1, 143 U.S. soldiers have died — five more than during the heavy fighting.

Oxfam began withdrawing its 15 international staff members on Monday and completed the move within 48 hours, Simon Springett, Oxfam's program manager for Iraq, told the Associated Press from Amman, Jordan. The London-based aid group had been working on water and sanitation projects with UNICEF in Iraq.

"The risk level was becoming unacceptable for us, making it impossible for our programs to operate," Springett said.

A day after the suicide truck bombing of the U.N. headquarters Aug. 19, which killed at least 23 people and injured more than 100, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund said they were temporarily removing some foreign staff. Many U.N. foreign workers also have subsequently left the country temporarily.

There are dozens of non-governmental aid and support groups working in Iraq, and a senior official at one group said most of the agencies were in the process of studying the reduction of foreign staff or already had.

"Most of them are reducing their staff as much as possible," Hanno Schaefer, spokesman for Caritas, the Catholic Church relief agency.

Springett said the bombing at the U.N. headquarters was only one among many factors that lead to the Oxfam decision to reduce its staff.

"We felt international organizations were becoming increasingly targeted," he said.

"I think there's been a blurring of humanitarian and military operations in Iraq," Springett said. "It's setting a very dangerous precedent."

He also said he had spoken to several other aid groups that were reviewing their security in Iraq.

The violence has hit Iraqis as well, with frequent carjackings and robberies reported by the population. Gunfire and explosions are commonplace in Baghdad.

In central Baghdad's Ali Baba and the 40 Thieves Square early Wednesday, two Iraqi policemen and three civilians were killed in a shootout with criminals, a police official at that scene told an Associated Press television crew.

Meanwhile, in northern Iraq U.S. troops continued raids targeting paramilitary forces, Saddam loyalists, Fedayeen Saddam militia and other subversive elements as part of "Operation Ivy Needle," military officials said.

World

War crimes prosecutor: The Security Council has decided to split the job of chief war crimes prosecutor Carla Del Ponte, allowing a new prosecutor to take charge of cases stemming from the 1994 Rwanda genocide while she focuses on the Balkans.

The council scheduled a vote Thursday on a resolution that would authorize the Rwanda tribunal to have its own prosecutor and set out a timetable for completing the work of both the Rwanda and Yugoslav tribunals by 2010.

Bosnia mass grave: Experts at Bosnia's largest known mass grave have recovered the remains of 270 victims in five weeks of digging and expect to find more as they burrow deeper, officials said Thursday.

The mass grave, with a surface area about the size of a tennis court, was opened last month on Crni Vrh hill, near the border with Serbia and about 50 miles northeast of Sarajevo. It is the 14th mass grave found in Bosnia this year.

Blast near Kosovo: A strong blast near a mosque rocked a town Thursday in Serbia's volatile south, close to the troubled Kosovo province, authorities reported.

The hand-grenade explosion hurt no one but caused slight damage.

It occurred in the center of Presevo, 190 miles south of Belgrade, said Serbian government spokesman Mica Markovic.

Stoning sentence appeal: A fearful 32-year-old Nigerian woman cuddled and nursed her toddler in an Islamic appeals court Wednesday as lawyers pleaded she be spared death by stoning for having sex outside marriage.

Heavily veiled and draped in the sweltering courtroom, Amina Lawal appeared overwhelmed by the crush of riot police, journalists and rights workers as she arrived for a case that has sparked international campaigns on her behalf.

"I've never been this afraid," Lawal said, tears rolling down her face as she made her way past police ringing the courthouse in northern Nigeria's Katsina state.

The divorced woman was convicted of having sex outside marriage in March 2002 by an Islamic court following the birth of her daughter, Wasila, out of wedlock. The young girl is now nearly 2.

Judges said Wednesday that they would issue a ruling in the 1½-year-old case on Sept. 25.

The alleged father of the baby denied responsibility and was acquitted.

Europe heat wave: The scorching heat wave blamed for thousands of deaths in France is also taking a heavy toll on the environment; millions of parched trees are yellowing prematurely and could die.

Compounding the damage from forest fires in the southeast, horticulturists say the loss of huge numbers of trees due to dry and hot conditions threatened ecological havoc.

Most Caesarians: For the fourth year in a row, South Korea had the highest rate of Caesarian-section births in the world, officials said Wednesday.

The National Health Insurance Corporation reported the 2002 C-section rate in South Korea was 39.2 percent, down from 43 percent the year before. But that figure still was twice that of the United States, at 23 percent; Japan, at 20 percent; and the European Union, at 20 percent.

Bali tourism: More than 1,500 Balinese tourist industry workers took to streets of the capital, Denpasar, on Wednesday to protest government plans to revoke visa-free travel for foreign visitors.

Bali, Indonesia's premier resort island, relies heavily on tourism and many say Jakarta's plans will crush efforts to revive the industry after it was

News tracker: What's new with old news

devastated by the Oct. 12 Bali terrorist attacks, the war in Iraq and the SARS outbreak.

French holiday plans: France's government is considering whether to scrap a national holiday and use workers' taxes from that day to finance better care for the elderly — the main victims of a heat wave estimated to have killed thousands.

The idea — radical in a country where leisure time is sacrosanct — provoked an immediate clash of opinions. The head of the leading business federation called it "fantastic." A leading Communist Party lawmaker was outraged.

Israeli leader's son: Prosecutors are investigating whether a son of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon received payments from two foreign-based businessmen with financial interests in Israel, an Israeli newspaper reported Wednesday.

The corruption investigation is one of three involving the Sharon family, and the inquiries have raised the prospect, still faint, that Sharon could be indicted and forced from office. The prime minister has denied wrongdoing in all cases.

War on terrorism

Terror suspect handover: Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri has personally asked President Bush for U.S. officials to hand over terrorist suspect Hambali, accused in numerous bomb attacks in Southeast Asia that killed hundreds of people, an official said Thursday.

Hasan Wirayuda, Indonesia's foreign minister, said Megawati told Bush in a recent phone call she wants Hambali — an Indonesian with alleged top-level links to al-Qaida — to face justice in his home country.

Hambali, whose real name is Risuan Isamuddin, was Southeast Asia's most wanted man until he was captured Aug. 11 in Thailand by Thai forces and the CIA. U.S. authorities flew him to an undisclosed location.

Hambali is the alleged operations chief of Jemaah Islamiyah, the militant network blamed in numerous deadly bombings in Southeast Asia in the past three years, including last year's Bali nightclub blasts and the Aug. 5 attack on the J.W. Marriott hotel in Jakarta.

Patriot Act challenge: A coalition of legal groups and backers of Sri Lanka's Tamil community have filed a challenge to a section of the USA Patriot Act that makes it illegal to provide "expert advice and assistance" to groups with alleged links to terrorists.

The five organizations and two individuals are seeking an injunction to prevent the government from enforcing the section, arguing it violates constitutional rights of free speech and against self-incrimination.

The lawsuit, filed Wednesday in federal court, names U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft and Secretary of State Colin Powell as defendants.

Aid from Japan: Japan's Foreign Ministry has asked the central government for \$547 million in emergency reconstruction aid for Iraq and Afghanistan in the upcoming fiscal year, officials said Wednesday.

The aid, which would make a six-fold increase from the current year, would be distributed entirely in the form of grants, a ministry official said on condition of anonymity.

Nation

9/11 transcripts: Nearly two years after the Sept. 11 attack on the World Trade Center, the voices of at least 36 victims have been identified on tapes of emergency calls and radio transmissions from that morning.

Authorities were to release transcripts of the calls Thursday, following a judge's ruling rejecting a bid by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to back out of an agreement it made with The New York Times.

A New Jersey judge ruled Friday that the transcripts must be released by the close of business Thursday. The Port Authority decided Monday not to appeal but urged the news media to use restraint.

Spy's life sentence: Convicted spy Jonathan Pollard will be seen in public next week for the first time in 16 years, when a federal judge considers whether to allow him to continue appealing his life sentence.

Pollard, a former civilian analyst for the U.S. Navy, was convicted of espionage for giving Israel tens of thousands of top-secret documents.

Israel has acknowledged that Pollard was its agent and has repeatedly asked the United States to release him. Pollard admits giving classified information to Israel, but contends his sentence was too harsh and violated a plea agreement with prosecutors.

Sniper video testimony: Lawyers for sniper suspect Lee Boyd Malvo are seeking to present videotapes at trial in lieu of live testimony from about two dozen people who knew Malvo when he lived in the Caribbean.

At a court hearing Wednesday, Fairfax County Commonwealth's Attorney Robert F. Horan Jr. expressed misgivings about the procedure after viewing some of the videotapes from Malvo's family and school teacher in Antigua and Jamaica, saying that the witnesses come off on the tape as though they have had recent contact with Malvo, even though they may have only known him in kindergarten.

Defense lawyers have sought to portray Malvo as being brainwashed or dominated by fellow suspect John Allen Muhammad.

Wellstone settlement: Family members of the late Sen. Paul Wellstone and five other passengers killed in an October plane crash reached a \$25 million insurance settlement with the company that operated the flight, the families' law firm confirmed Thursday.

W.Va. sniper task force: The task force investigating three fatal sniper-style shootings will move to new headquarters as the search for the shooter moves into a new phase, a spokeswoman said Wednesday.

"We're now transitioning from that crisis stage to a permanent phase of the investigation," said Vera Fedorak, with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

The task force has received more than 1,000 leads since three people were killed by a .22-caliber rifle outside Kanawha County convenience stores in separate shootings over a four-day period.

Life sentence for arson: A man was sentenced to life in prison Wednesday after admitting he set a fire in Baltimore that killed a family of seven, which blaze investigators said was in retaliation against a mother who crusaded against drug dealers.

Darrell Brooks, 22, could have faced the death penalty, but reached a deal with prosecutors that sent him to prison for life without parole.

Relatives of the victims wept at the sentencing as they described the loss of Angela and Carnell Dawson and their five children.

The sentence came nearly a year after Brooks allegedly began targeting the home of the Dawsons and their five children, ages 9, 10, 12 and 14.

Business

WorldCom CEO charges: Oklahoma prosecutors filed the first criminal charges Wednesday against WorldCom and former CEO Bernard Ebbers in the \$11 billion accounting scandal that plunged the long-distance giant into bankruptcy.

The company, Ebbers and five other former executives were accused of falsifying the books in violation of Oklahoma securities law.

From wire reports

News from around the war

Foreign troops in Iraq

AL DIWANIYA, Iraq — In a relatively modest but welcome bit of relief for American forces, troops from 21 countries including Spain, Poland and four Central American nations will begin taking over duties from U.S. Marines in south-central Iraq this week.

The changeover involving about 10,000 fresh troops comes as President Bush renews efforts to enlist more foreign countries' help in Iraq, hoping that last week's bombing of the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad will motivate reluctant countries to take part in shortening up security.

But the soldiers taking over this week are not an immediate response to Bush's call. Rather, they are fulfilling promises their nations made months ago to contribute forces to the "coalition of the willing" assembled by the United States and Britain. Nor will their arrival augment the military presence in Iraq, where anti-coalition attacks and other violence are showing no signs of letting up.

Instead, the foreign forces will replace troops that have been here for months.

The 1,300-strong Spanish contingent will formally relieve U.S. forces, including troops from the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, on Thursday. They will be joined at their base in al Diwaniyah this week by 1,200 troops from Honduras, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua and El Salvador — all of whom will be under Spanish command.

"Our mission is fundamentally to establish stability and security in the region and help civil authorities, governors and mayors to carry out their duties and also help as much as possible in the reconstruction of Iraq," said Spanish Army Gen. Alfredo Cardona, the contingent's commanding officer.

British soldier killed near Basra

BAGHDAD, Iraq — One British soldier was killed and a second was injured when their convoy was caught between two crowds and fired on with small arms and rocket-propelled grenades in the southern town of Ali as-Sharqi, the British military reported Thursday.

Lt. Cmdr. Richard Walters said the shooting occurred Wednesday night as the soldiers were returning from a raid in Ali al-Gharbi. He said the soldiers met a crowd of about 30 people who formed a roadblock. Soldiers moved around the crowd, only to be stopped by a second crowd blocking the road near Fort Jennings.

Walters said the soldiers got down from their vehicles, fired two warning shots trying to disperse the groups when the Iraqis opened fire with small arms and rocket-propelled grenades, killing one soldier and wounding the second in the hand.

Vieira de Mello buried in Geneva

GENEVA — The family, friends and colleagues of Sergio Vieira de Mello gathered Thursday to bury the slain U.N. envoy to Iraq in the city where he started a humanitarian career that won him wide acclaim.

Following a ceremony at a Roman Catholic church, Vieira de Mello was being laid to rest in a private ceremony by his widow, Annie, and two grown sons later Thursday in Geneva's Cimetiere des Rois — or Cemetery of Kings — a leafy graveyard in the heart of the Swiss city's busy downtown.

Vieira de Mello, 55, was killed Aug. 19 in a suicide truck bombing at the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad. Nine other U.N. staffers and at least 13 other people died in the blast, which injured more than a hundred.

Iraqi parents name son George Bush

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A Baghdad mother and father, to show their thanks to President Bush for the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, have named their son after the American leader.

Had the couple had twin boys, they say, the would have named them George Bush and Tony Blair.

The new George Bush — probably the only one in Baghdad — was born six weeks ago to Nadia Jergis Mohammed, 34, and her husband Abdul Kader Faris, 41.

"I tell you all Iraqis hated Saddam's regime. It was only George Bush who liberated us, without him it wouldn't have happened. If he hadn't done it the sons of Saddam would have ruled us for years. He saved us from Saddam and that's why we named our son after him," Mohammed told Associated Press Television News.

Baby Bush, born July 11, carries the full name George Bush Abdul Kader Faris Abed El-Hussein.

Nations say they're in for long haul

VIENNA, Austria — They're talking tough — and standing firm.

Nations that have sent forces to help keep the

peace in postwar Iraq have no immediate plans to draw down or pull out despite mounting casualties, eroding security and a growing wariness of the potential for a quagmire.

From Slovakia to Singapore, coalition governments are steeling their resolve. Others are offering more than troops, such as Hungary, which says it's open to a U.S. proposal to train up to 28,000 Iraqi police cadets at one of its military bases.

"To run away from this conflict only means to turn a blind eye to reality," said Cyril Svoboda, foreign minister of the Czech Republic, which has 312 personnel stationed at a military hospital in Basra, in southern Iraq.

"It is important for us to stay in Iraq," he told the Pravo newspaper this week. "One must confront terrorism. No country today is considerably safer or less safe than another."

Coalition countries certainly aren't blind to the dangers: 281 Americans have died since the beginning of military operations in Iraq; 143 of them have died since President Bush declared major combat operations over.

The British government has reported 49 deaths. Denmark's military has reported one casualty.

The deaths, and last week's bombing of U.N. headquarters in Baghdad that killed more than 20 people, have some ordinary citizens skittish and bracing for more.

"I don't want any of them to get hurt," said Agnes Lipecz, 44, a travel agent in Hungary, which has sent 300 noncombat troops.

"I think it was too early for them to go when there are still all these attacks, and they should come home if they are attacked."

The coalition includes about 140,000 U.S. soldiers backed by some 24,000 troops from other countries, including 11,000 from Britain, 3,000 from Italy, 2,400 from Poland, 1,650 from Ukraine and 1,300 from Spain.

Besides the plea for troops, coalition countries can expect to be asked to dig deep and contribute financially to the rebuilding effort. L. Paul Bremer, the top U.S. official in Iraq, told The Washington Post for Wednesday's editions that "several tens of billions" of dollars will be needed from abroad in the next year to rebuild the country.

Sudan punishes Syrian

KHARTOUM, Sudan — A Sudanese court has convicted a Syrian and sentenced him to a month in prison for training Palestinians and Saudis to carry out attacks against U.S. forces in Iraq.

The court also convicted two Sudanese of helping the Syrian and providing information to help others plan attacks on government and Jewish targets in Eritrea, according to a statement released Thursday.

The court gave few details about the unidentified defendants or the investigations, and officials refused to comment — a possible reflection of the country's nervousness that it could once again be seen as a terrorist haven.

Sudan has a history of giving refuge to Islamic extremists.

Saudi-born Osama bin Laden lived in Sudan for several years until 1996, when he left for Afghanistan. Egypt and the United States accused Sudan of sheltering terrorists in the 1990s, but in recent years Khartoum has attempted to distance itself from militants and improve ties.

In a statement Wednesday, the court said it convicted the Syrian for holding classes in Sudan to train Saudis and Palestinians to carry out anti-American attacks in Iraq.

A Saudi was to be expelled to Saudi Arabia, the court said.

There were no details on how many Saudis and Palestinians were involved in the classes.

The court said the Syrian and two Sudanese were convicted of aiding a foreign group and plotting attacks abroad. The Syrian was sentenced to one month in prison and fined \$192,000. One Sudanese was sentenced to five months in prison and the other to six months.

Prosecutor Mohammed Farid, who handled the case, refused to comment Thursday when contacted by The Associated Press.

Two other Sudanese men were at large and were thought to be a source of funding and the link between the Saudis and Palestinians and the three convicted men.

Schroeder sees place for troops

BERLIN — Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder said that Germany was committed to deploying troops to northern Afghanistan to support reconstruction efforts, expanding the German peacekeeping role beyond Kabul.

Schroeder's Security Cabinet on Wednesday approved sending a possible 250 troops to the Konduz region to help maintain order and aid civilian relief organizations. The decision requires parliamentary approval.

"It has become clear that, on the one hand, the extension of the [peacekeeping] process makes sense and is necessary to stabilize the central government in Afghanistan; and on the other hand, that it is responsible as far as the security of the soldiers is concerned," Schroeder told reporters. He did not discuss a timeframe.

Earlier this month, Germany and the Netherlands handed over control of the 5,000-strong International Security Assistance Force in Kabul to NATO. Germany has 2,000 troops in Kabul, and Defense Minister Peter Struck has said repeatedly he favors following the United States and Britain in sending troops to the provinces of Afghanistan to bolster reconstruction.

Congressmen: Iraqi intel crucial

TIKRIT, Iraq — A congressional delegation visiting Iraq called for more Iraqi forces to be trained to relieve U.S. troops and for an increase in intelligence gathering to stem guerrilla attacks on American-led coalition forces.

"I think there is a consensus among all of us that we need to continue to gather intelligence. Intelligence gathering is the most important thing that we can do at this point," said Rep. Tom Davis, R-Va., who led the 11-member House delegation on a five-day visit to the country.

He said while the majority of Iraqi people "are happy that we are here... there are some elements of the old regime that have gone underground, that are taking potshots here and there and still putting our soldiers in harm's way."

Other threats to U.S.-led coalition forces come from "extremists from other countries coming across the border just to stick it to the United States, and hope that our mission here fails, because a success here can have repercussions across the Arab world," he said.

Davis said an increase in U.S. troops was not a solution. "I think you have more of an intelligence problem than a troop problem, in talking about guarding the borders and the like. I'm not ready to say that we need more troops."

"Our goal is to get U.S. troops out of here as quickly as we can and to get the job done. It may take awhile, but that's our goal. And train Iraqis," he said.

Mountain pass retaken

KABUL, Afghanistan — American and Afghan forces killed about a dozen insurgents Wednesday and recaptured a mountain pass in southeastern Afghanistan — the scene of heavy fighting and U.S. bombardments this week, a local official said.

Suspected Taliban guerrillas were believed to still be hiding in the rugged area in Zabul province, where U.S. and Afghan soldiers reoccupied the Moray Pass, said Khalil Hotak, chief of the provincial intelligence service.

Some of the fighters escaped toward Uruzgan province to the west, Hotak said.

U.S. military said that one coalition special operation soldier was shot in the shoulder during a fire-fight in Uruzgan on Tuesday night.

Coalition aircraft — including AV-8 Harriers, A-10 Thunderbolts and Apache helicopters — fired on insurgents on Tuesday afternoon in clashes in Uruzgan, Col. Rodney Davis, spokesman for the U.S. military in Afghanistan, told a news briefing in Kabul.

He said coalition forces were continuing operations in Uruzgan as well as neighboring Zabul and Kandahar.

"We will continue to do what we have been doing, that is take advantage of whatever intelligence we have and kill anti-coalition forces where we find them," he said.

Davis had no further details on casualties, and it was not possible to immediately confirm Hotak's report that 12 or more suspected Taliban were killed Wednesday and whether the bodies had been collected.

The mountainous region between the three provinces has been the scene of fierce fighting in recent days, particularly in Dai Chupan district, where the Moray Pass is located. Under attack from the ground and air, guerrillas had been using mortars and heavy machine guns to defend the pass.

On Monday, a Taliban camp was bombed and destroyed in another part of Dai Chupan, killing at least 14 insurgents, although other officials gave a higher death toll.

"I think we were successful in locating a base of anti-coalition activity," Davis said.

The battles follow a series of strikes by suspected Taliban against Afghan police and government officials in recent weeks, particularly in the south and east of the country. The assaults have created new doubts about how much progress has been made by the U.S.-led effort to secure and rebuild the war-battered nation.

Hotak has said the Taliban were operating with al-Qaida and loyalists of renegade rebel commander Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

From wire reports

Hamburg court wants testimony of al-Qaida agent

BY GEIR MOULSON

The Associated Press

HAMBURG, Germany — A German court trying a Sept. 11 terror suspect said Thursday it would seek testimony from a captured al-Qaida leader who allegedly masterminded the attacks on the United States.

Presiding Judge Klaus Rühle said the Hamburg state court prepared a request for Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, who is in U.S. custody, to testify in the trial of a man accused of supporting the Hamburg al-Qaida cell that included three Sept. 11 pilots.

Given Mohammed's alleged role, he should be able to describe where the attacks were planned, said Guel Pinar, defense attorney for Abdelghani Mzoudi, 30. Mohammed, al-Qaida's suspected No. 3 official, was arrested March 1 in Pakistan.

Mzoudi's lawyers already have pressed for testimony from Ramzi Binalshibh, another suspect in U.S. custody who is believed to have been the Hamburg cell's key contact with al-Qaida.

But chances of testimony from either man seemed slim. The court failed to secure an appearance by Binalshibh in the trial of the first Sept. 11 suspect, Mounir el Motassadeq, and German authorities refused to hand over transcripts from Binalshibh's interrogation.

Mzoudi could face 15 years in prison if convicted on charges of accessory to murder and membership in a terrorist organization. The Hamburg court convicted el Motassadeq on the same charges in February.

On Thursday, a witness whose testimony was vital to that conviction retold her memory of a 1999 conversation in which one of the suicide pilots predicted an attack that would kill thousands.

Angela Duile, 31, said the anti-American outburst by Marwan al-Shehhi came in May 1999 or June 1999 at the Hamburg library where she worked.

"I don't know how it happened. It was really spewing forth," she said. "And then he said: 'Something will happen, you'll see. There will be thousands of dead.' I believe the words 'World Trade Center' also were mentioned."

Pressed by Presiding Judge Klaus Rühle, she said: "I believe the words were mentioned, but I could not say it 100 percent."

Yet she stood by her account, which also raised questions during el Motassadeq's trial. She explained that she was leaving work when al-Shehhi approached her, and remembered asking the friend who was picking her up from the library what the World Trade Center was.

Testifying later, the friend, 32-year-old Frank Jankowski, said he had no recollection of the incident, but conceded that he had a "very bad memory."

Al-Shehhi lived and studied in Hamburg along with fellow suicide pilots Mohamed Atta and Ziad Jarrah, both of whom Duile said she also saw at the library. Mzoudi is accused of providing logistical help to their cell.

Defense lawyer Pinar played down Duile's evidence.

"This testimony really isn't so important — the witness herself says she can't say whether the words 'World Trade Center' were said," said.

Bush may seek more war funds earlier

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration may ask Congress next month for a few billion more dollars for Iraq reconstruction, officials said Wednesday, only a few weeks after the Pentagon said extra money would not be needed at least until the new budget year begins in October.

The possible early infusion of fresh cash is an indication of the urgency felt by L. Paul Bremer, the civilian administrator of Iraq, and others in the U.S. administration to make faster progress in Iraq.

The administration has been saying for weeks that it expects to request billions in emergency funding for Iraq during the 2004 budget year, but until now it had insisted enough money was available through September to pay

for civic projects like repairing utilities and schools.

As recently as Aug. 4, the Pentagon had estimated that \$4 billion of the \$62.6 billion in emergency funding it received in April would be left over when the budget year ends Sept. 30.

The United States is spending about \$3.9 billion a month on military operations in Iraq, and that does not count funds used by Bremer's Coalition Provisional Authority to rebuild the country.

The U.S. military has about 140,000 troops in Iraq and is expected to maintain that level for the foreseeable future. Some in Congress are calling for more troops, which would add costs.

White House spokeswoman Claire Buchanan said it was too early to say for sure how much extra money would be needed to cover costs in Iraq — or when it would be requested.

"We don't have the numbers at this

point, and until we have responsible numbers we're not going to go to Congress," she said, speaking at President Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas.

A Pentagon spokesman, Lt. Col. Kenneth McClellan, also declined to discuss timing or amounts.

Some in Congress are critical of the administration for not offering an estimate of how much the Iraq occupation and reconstruction effort will cost next year. The Pentagon says it depends on several variables, including international contributions and the extent of Iraqi oil revenues.

Bremer told The Washington Post on Tuesday that it would take years and "several tens of billions" of dollars from outside Iraq to get the country functioning again. Bush said Tuesday it would take a "substantial commitment of time and resources," but he offered no figures.

developed without Lynch's authorization, while CBS abandoned its plans for a Lynch movie.

U.S. cuts presence at Saudi air base

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon has withdrawn most of its forces from the strategic Mideast kingdom of Saudi Arabia, ending a decade-long buildup started after the first war against Iraq's Saddam Hussein.

With Saddam ousted from office in neighboring Iraq nearly five months ago, U.S. military officials transferred back to the Saudis control of portions of Prince Sultan Air Base and deactivated the 363rd Air Expeditionary Wing that has operated there, the Air Force said in a statement Wednesday.

"The end of [major combat operations in Iraq] and Saddam Hussein's government means the American military mission here is over," Maj. Gen. Robert J. Elder Jr., a commander there, was quoted as saying at Tuesday's withdrawal ceremony.

Saudi government officials asked U.S. servicemen to deploy to Saudi Arabia for the 1991 Persian Gulf War. But U.S. presence was opposed by some in the kingdom — the site of Islam's holiest sites — and was among reasons cited by Saudi-born Osama bin Laden for his al-Qaida attacks on America on Sept. 11, 2001.

A crew of a few hundred troops is to remain, and U.S. military personnel will continue training with Saudi forces and holding joint exercises, officials said.

The U.S.-Saudi agreement on U.S. withdrawal was made April 29 — a day before President Bush declared major combat over in Iraq. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said at that time that the work done at Prince Sultan Air Base was being shifted to Al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar.

From wire reports

Blair defends stand on Iraqi weapons

BY JILL LAWLESS

The Associated Press

LONDON — Prime Minister Tony Blair said Thursday he would have had to resign if there had been any truth in a media report claiming that his government distorted information about Iraqi weapons.

Blair said a British Broadcasting Corp. report that his office had exaggerated estimates of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction was not true and that it questioned his credibility.

"It was an extraordinary allegation to make and an extremely serious one," he told an inquiry in the apparent suicide of a government weapons expert who was caught up in the political storm over the government's Iraq policy.

"If it were true it would mean we had behaved in the most disgraceful manner and I would have had to resign as prime minister," he added.

Blair, who spoke for about two hours, is only the second British prime minister to appear in public before a judicial inquiry.

Conservative premier John Major appeared at a 1994 inquiry into whether the government violated its own policy on weapons sales to Iraq under his predecessor, Margaret Thatcher.

Blair ordered the inquiry into the death of scientist David Kelly, 59, which is being led by senior appeals judge Lord Hutton.

Looking calm and confident as he gave evidence at London's imposing High Court, Blair said a contentious government dossier on Iraq's arsenal released last September was based on intelligence sources and was not manipulated to make a stronger case for war.

"At that stage, the strategy was not to use the dossier as the immediate reason for going to conflict, but as the reason why we had to return to the issue of Saddam's weapons of mass destruction," he said.

Blair told the inquiry that a claim in the dossier that Iraq could deploy weapons of mass destruction within 45 minutes came from British intelligence, and was not inserted at the insistence of his office, as the BBC report claimed.

Blair said he had insisted that the dossier "had to be a document that was owned by the Joint Intelligence Committee and its chairman John Scarlett... We could not produce this as evidence that came from anything other than an objective source."

"There was no reason for us to doubt the intelligence at all," he added.

The inquiry is examining the events leading up to the death of Kelly, who apparently committed suicide after being identified as the likely source of the BBC report.

Blair has vigorously denied misleading lawmakers or the public.

The BBC report sparked a bitter dispute between the public broadcaster and the government, with the credibility of both at stake.

The furor has mushroomed into the biggest political crisis Blair has faced in six years in power. While there has been little speculation that Blair could be forced from power, the row has damaged his credibility, with opinion polls showing many people no longer trust the government.

Dozens of anti-war protesters jeered Blair as he arrived at the central London court. Scores of people had lined up outside the building, some camping out overnight for a chance to hear Blair give evidence.

Blair said in July, shortly after Kelly's death, that he did not authorize the scientist's identification by government officials.

But he told the inquiry Thursday that he took responsibility for the decisions by officials that led to Kelly being identified publicly after the scientist told superiors at the Ministry of Defence he might be the source for the BBC story.

Army days over for Lynch

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — Former POW Jessica Lynch, the Iraq war's most recognized soldier, has been honorably discharged from the U.S. Army.

"As of now, she is not a member of the military anymore," her lawyer, Stephen Goodwin of Charleston, said Wednesday.

Lynch, 20, suffered multiple broken bones and other injuries when her 507th Maintenance Company was ambushed in the southern Iraqi city of Nasiriyah on March 23.

Her rescue on April 1 from an Iraqi hospital by special forces quickly made an American hero out of the petite blonde, who joined the Army to get an education and become a kindergarten teacher.

She returned home last month to a hero's welcome after a long stay at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. She revisited the hospital for the first time last week for a checkup.

It was during that trip that Lynch was granted a medical discharge, which she had earlier requested, Goodwin said.

Lynch will continue physical therapy at Camden-Clark Memorial Hospital in Parkersburg, where she has been treated since her release from Walter Reed. She can walk with crutches, but is still recovering from her injuries.

Goodwin said he wasn't sure if Lynch is receiving medical disability.

Lynch has not spoken publicly about her ordeal, but has said through a spokesman that she plans to tell her story in a book to be published by the end of the year.

"Like any citizen, she is now free to enter into a contract," Goodwin said.

Goodwin said Lynch had not signed a book deal with anyone as of Wednesday.

NBC plans a TV movie starring Laura Regan that has been

Hearings open on alleged POW abuse

BY TAREK AL-ISSAWI

The Associated Press

UMM QASR, Iraq — The U.S. military opened a hearing Wednesday into accusations against four U.S. soldiers who allegedly abused Iraqi prisoners of war at a camp in this southern port city in May.

Possible charges include dereliction of duty, assault and maltreatment of prisoners. Three of the soldiers also could be charged with making a false official statement and one of them faces possible obstruction of justice counts.

The accused soldiers — Spc. Timothy Canjar, 21; Sgt. Shawna Edmondson, 24; Master Sgt. Lisa Marie Gorman, 35, and Staff Sgt. Scott A. McKenzie, 38 — are all from the 320 Military Police Battalion.

The four were part of a unit that was transporting a busload of captives to a prisoner-of-war processing center in Umm Qasr.

The hearing was being held in a tent set up in Camp Bucca, where the alleged abuse took place.

"The hearing is being held to determine whether there is enough evidence to go to trial or dismiss the case," said Maj. Vic Harris, a U.S. army spokesman at Camp Bucca.

The hearing is the equivalent of a civilian grand jury investigation, which will produce a nonbinding recommendation to be forwarded to senior military officials for a final judgment.

Of the four, Gorman and Canjar appeared to be the most affected, both initially looking pale and staring blankly for long periods of times, occasionally looking directly at witnesses facing them across the tent, or glancing at fellow soldiers or officers attending the hearing.

A government witness, Stephen Stallard, a squad leader of a unit involved in transporting 44 Iraqi prisoners of war on the day of the alleged incident, said in his testimony that Gorman told him "I think we show the prisoners too much respect." Gorman is a 14-year Pennsylvania state police veteran.

"In my opinion, he was screaming for his life," Stallard said, recalling the alleged abuse one of the prisoners.

The case has caused an uproar in Pennsylvania, where the battalion is based.

The families of the four accused soldiers have enlisted the help of politicians, veterans groups and friends to lobby for support and persuade the military to dismiss the charges.

"A bloody nose and a twisted arm, and our kids are facing prison time?" said Edmondson's mother, Linda Edmondson. "In time of war, it's ridiculous. She could have shot them, if she wanted to hurt someone."

The list of charges, obtained by The Associated Press, included kicking and striking Iraqi prisoners of war in the groin, face, abdomen and head, and holding prisoners and encouraging others to kick them.

"They are human beings and they should be treated with dignity and respect, and certainly according to the Geneva Convention," said Harris.

Harris said that the military was aware of the feelings of the families of the accused soldiers, "but they have to know that this is how the system works."

Amnesty International has said some former prisoners of coalition troops have complained that they were treated poorly, held in filthy conditions, restrained in painful positions, for long periods and tortured by being exposed to bright lights and loud music for prolonged periods.

Air Force Academy scandal reaches into Colorado Springs

BY ROBERT WELLER

The Associated Press

DENVER — The sex assault scandal at the Air Force Academy is spilling over into neighboring Colorado Springs with two incidents in about a month involving cadets and civilians.

Richard Skorman, Colorado Springs' vice mayor, said the reports hurt the academy's reputation and worry city residents.

"Given the history of what's gone on there, I think everybody is uncomfortable in ways they haven't been in the past," he said. "I think that the cadets should certainly be more cognizant of how the community feels about them and how sensitive it is about these sorts of issues."

In the latest incident, a police officer working at a high school dance Friday night learned two girls had left, apparently to rendezvous with male cadets at a motel. Police who raided the room said they found seven cadets with the two girls, 16 and 18.

The girls and three of the cadets were cited for underage drinking. The four other cadets were 21, academy spokesman Lt. Col. Perry Nouis said. All were juniors.

Last month, senior cadet Phillip D. Hawkins, 21, was arrested in downtown Colorado Springs when police found him with a young woman who had passed out in the bed of his pickup truck. Prosecutors said he knew his victim was helpless and had not consented to sex.

Hawkins appeared in court Monday on sexual assault charges and a preliminary hearing was scheduled for Sept. 26.

In the aftermath of the assault scandal that resulted in the ouster of the academy's commanders earlier this year, academy officials have stressed that underage cadets must not drink and no cadet should provide alcohol to minors.

Cadets: Underage drinking incident 'stupid'

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. — Cadet Erin Shaw has just one thing to say about seven of her classmates who were caught drinking in a hotel room with two female high-school students at a time the academy is under the microscope for a sex assault scandal.

"I think it was stupid of them," said Shaw, a sophomore from Monument, Colo. "Under the conditions we are under, you would think they would know better. People are walking on eggshells around here."

Shaw's sentiments were echoed by several cadets at the scenic mountain campus Tuesday, and by Lt. Gen. John Rosa, who took over as superintendent in July.

Seven 20- and 21-year-old male cadets were caught in an off-campus hotel room early Saturday with two female teens, 16 and 18 years. Those under 21 were ticketed by police for drinking.

In an Associated Press interview Tuesday, Rosa said any cadet found to have supplied alcohol to a minor would most likely be expelled under a zero tolerance drinking policy that is part of the "agenda of change" ordered by the Air Force.

However, Colorado Springs police said the 21-year-old sister of one of the girls bought the alcohol.

Rosa said the entire 4,000-member cadet corps would get a stern lecture from the school's commandant, Brig. Gen. Johnny Weida, on the consequences of such offenses to their military careers and to the institution.

Cadet to be court-martialed for drug dealing

DENVER — The Air Force Academy announced Monday that a cadet will be court-martialed on charges of dealing the club drug Ecstasy.

Junior cadet Robert C. Graham II will be court-martialed Thursday for allegedly using and distributing two hallucinogenic drugs, the academy said. If convicted, he faces dismissal from the academy and 25 years imprisonment.

From wire reports

"Alcohol seems to continually show up as a factor in the situations and it is a concern to everyone," Nouis said.

"You wonder how this could happen. This year it has been truly stressed that you have to do the right thing and if you don't you are going to be held accountable. And that message has been delivered repeatedly," he said.

The reports of sexual assaults, including claims that female cadets were punished for reporting them, led to three military investigations and a fourth by an independent panel created by Congress. Only one has been completed, and it found that although

not enough attention was paid to the assaults there was no attempt to cover them up.

The Gazette of Colorado Springs reported this weekend that top Air Force officials and members of Congress were alerted to the sex assault problem in 1996 but did nothing.

The Gazette said a four-page report by a high-level Air Force whistleblower warned the academy had become a haven for rapists because of a "culture of silence" that discouraged women from reporting attacks.

Then-Air Force Secretary Sheila Widnall said the report never reached her.

U.S., Russia watch each other's military exercises

The Associated Press

MOSCOW — Russia dispatched two reconnaissance aircraft to observe joint U.S.-South Korean military exercises after spotting two U.S. submarines shadowing large-scale maneuvers of the Russian Pacific Fleet, Russian news agencies reported Wednesday.

Russia's ITAR-Tass and Interfax news agencies, citing an unidentified high-level Defense Ministry official, said the decision to send the jets was in direct response to the discovery of the U.S. submarines just outside of Russian territorial waters in Russia's Far East.

Adm. Vladimir Kuroyedov, Russia's navy chief, said Monday that the Russian Navy discovered the two American submarines watching their exercise, but didn't interact with them because neither submarine attempted to enter Russian waters.

The Russian maneuvers, which also involved air force and other branches of the military, were the largest since the 1991 Soviet collapse. Ships from South Korea and Japan were participating, while China, Canada and South Korea also sent observers to watch.

The exercises ended Tuesday.

ITAR-Tass and Interfax, citing the defense official, said the United States also had been invited to send a delegation, but declined. Both news agencies noted, however that the United States was involved in joint exercises nearby with South Korea.

The annual U.S.-South Korea exercises, called Ulchi Focus Lens, began last week and focus on computer simulation tests to coordinate combat strategies. They were due to end on Friday.

DOD plans to improve maternity wards

BETHESDA, Md. — Military hospital maternity wards are getting face lifts and upgraded equipment through a program Defense Department health officials say will help families not only adapt to their newest additions, but make them happier overall and possibly stick with the military for long-term careers.

Some of the initiatives of the Family-Centered Care program include private recovery rooms, sonograms during a woman's second trimester, 24-hour lactation support programs and family counseling for both parents, touching on topics from postpartum depression to how to change a diaper, officials said.

Overseas hospitals in particular are getting focused attention because patients have fewer alternatives for outside health care than stateside members, Maj. Gen. Kenneth Farmer Jr., the Army's deputy surgeon general, said Wednesday during a health conference at the National Naval Medical Center in Maryland.

Roughly 50,000 children a year are born in military treatment facilities.

As a result of improvements, both the Air Force and the Army have seen increases in the recent number of child-births at military hospitals. The main reason is servicemembers and their families are using military hospitals instead of civilian hospitals, said Air Force Maj. Gen. James Roubush, deputy surgeon general.

The family-care improvements will go a long way toward retaining servicemembers, said David Chu, the undersecretary for personnel and readiness. "There's an old military saying that says retention decisions are made around the dinner table," he said.

Today, a majority of the force is married, with an average of 1.3 children, with long-term plans of military careers or planning for their children's college education, he said.

From staff reports

Shop or not, DeCA wants your views

BY LISA BURGESS

Stars And Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — If you have two minutes on your hands and access to the Internet, the Defense Commissary Agency wants your opinions — and you may win \$50 worth of free food for your thoughts.

The Fort Lee, Va.-based agency is trying to figure out why more than 70 percent of younger service members tend not to take advantage of their commissary privileges, which typically save grocery shoppers an average of 30 percent off regular prices, according to Bonnie Powell, DECA's marketing strategic program manager.

So for the first time, a committee of industry members who supply the agency with products is conducting an online survey of commissary shopping habits and perception of savings.

After the project ends Sept. 30, this "Consumer Awareness Team" will hold a random drawing that will award 250 survey takers with a \$50 commissary gift check, according to CAT chairman Steve Lamkin.

DECA already conducts its own official Commissary Customer Satisfaction Surveys twice a year, handing out questionnaires in each of the 280 commissaries in its worldwide chain.

But those surveys, while useful, are missing the "mystery audience" — those active-duty service members who don't use the commissaries, Powell said in a Wednesday telephone interview.

"Our target right now is to reach out to the E-1s through E-6s," Powell said. "This seems to be the group least likely to shop [at commissaries] — they don't seem to realize how much they're missing out, but we don't know why."

Some military members appear unimpressed with commissary choices or don't believe the products are a good value, Powell said.

"We're trying to find out if there is a perception that the savings aren't there and combat that," Powell said.

Others are uncertain about how their commissary privileges work, Powell said.

"We've even had some new [members] tell us they thought they had to be married to use the commissaries," she said.

But because Defense Department rules prohibit DECA from using any of its profits for advertising and promotions, "We can't reach people outside the commissary," to find out why they aren't using the facilities, Powell said.

That's where the CAT comes in, said Lamkin, who is also regional director for military sales for Campbell Soup Co., headquartered in Camden, N.J.

The team has existed for more than six years to help DECA research and fund projects to help military servicemembers understand the value of their commissary benefit, Lamkin said Wednesday.

Early this spring, the CAT and DECA marketers decided to work on the "missing member" dilemma by making up the surveys.

The survey includes just six questions, ranging from, "What percentage (off retail) do you feel you save at the commissary?" to, "If you are not a regular commissary shopper, what factor most discourages you?"

The answers, Lamkin hopes, "will give us a better understanding, so we can develop more projects down the road" to increase commissary use.

To kick off the project, members of the American Logistics Agency, a Washington, D.C., group made up largely of DECA suppliers and who sponsors the CAT, donated a host of items to insert into 50,000 "goodie bags."

The bags include not only a postage-paid survey card, but freebies like a 50-page "easy family meals" cookbook from Campbell's, a coupon for free coffee, toothpaste, fabric softener and even a \$10 phone card. DECA has also included a guide to commissary benefits brochure in the bags.

Since June, the bags have been distributed around the world to military bases, conferences and other events where reservists, National Guard members and young servicemembers congregate.

The bags are not being distributed at commissaries, because "the focus is to get the bags into the hands of the E-1s through E-6s" who are the survey's target audience, Lamkin said.

People who fill out the survey cards will also be eligible for the \$50 gift certificate drawing. So far, the CAT team has received more than 700 survey cards in the mail, "and all of the goodie bags have not even been handed out yet," Lamkin said.

But the major response has been to the Internet survey, which went online in mid-June and has already received more than 12,000 replies, Powell said.

Lamkin said he plans to present the results of the survey on Oct. 16, during the American Logistics Agency's annual convention in Atlanta, Ga. DECA will attend the meeting as well, Powell said.

Note: Any authorized commissary shopper can take the survey online at <http://catsurvey.shortsurveys.com>. E-mail Lisa Burgess at: burgessl@stripes.osd.mil

Hope eulogized at memorial

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — A humorist told those gathered at a memorial service for Bob Hope that the tireless comedian had a simple reason for not taking time off, perhaps to go fishing: "Fish," Hope once said, "don't applaud."

The memorial Mass on Wednesday drew some 900 guests, including politicians, generals and Hollywood stars, to remember the man who entertained Americans through vaudeville, radio, movies and television, and boosted the morale of U.S. soldiers over 50 years of wars.

"He was so special because he gave so much to everyone besides his humor," actress Loni Anderson said outside the church. "We've lost a giant, probably the greatest entertainer of our century."

Hope died July 27 at age 100.

Mourners included Hope's widow, Dolores; former President Ford and his wife, Betty; former first lady Nancy Reagan, Sen. Dianne Feinstein and Gen. Richard Myers.

The service began with an honor guard bearing the flags of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard, representing the service men and women Hope entertained during his USO tours.

Other guests included Mickey Rooney, Hal Holbrook, Raquel Welch, Marie Osmond, Phyllis Diller, Ed McMahon, Norm Crosby, retired Gen. William Westmoreland, former California Gov. Pete Wilson, and businessman Lee Iacocca.

The service ended with a Marine bugler playing "Taps" and a choir softly humming "Thanks for the Memory," Hope's theme song.

Ten Commandments monument removed

The Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — A 2½-ton granite monument of the Ten Commandments that became a lightning rod in a legal storm over church and state was wheeled from the rotunda of the Alabama Supreme Court building Wednesday as protesters knelt, prayed and chanted, "Put it back!"

Suspended Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore, who installed the engraved set of tablets two years ago and risked his career to keep it there after a federal judge ordered it removed, said he would take his fight to the U.S. Supreme Court.

"It is a sad day in our country when the moral foundation of our laws and the acknowledgment of God has to be hidden from public view to appease a federal judge," he said.

To the dismay of scores of supporters who had held a weeklong vigil outside the front doors, the 5,280-pound monument was jacked up by a work crew and taken away to a back room with a heavy-duty hydraulic hand truck.

Building officials did not immediately say where the monument would be stored or whether the public would ever be allowed to see it.

U.S. District Judge Myron Thompson of Montgomery had ruled last year that the monument violates the Constitution's ban on government endorsement of a religious doctrine.

"This is a tremendous victory for the rule of law and respect for religious diversity," said the Rev. Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

"Perhaps Roy Moore will soon leave the bench and move into the pulpit, which he seems better suited for."

As the monument left public view, a federal judge in Mobile dismissed a lawsuit that had been filed this week in a last-ditch effort to block its removal.

Asked about President Bush's view of the controversy, White House spokeswoman Claire Buchan said: "It is important that we respect our laws and our courts. In some instances the courts have ruled that the posting of Ten Commandments is OK. In other circumstances they have ruled that it's not OK. In either case, there is always opportunity for appeal of courts' decisions."

Hundreds took part in the vigil, and organizers said the protest would not end with the monument's removal.

"They can move it out of view, but they can't move it out of our hearts," said Rick Moser, 47, of Woodstock, Ga.

Republican Gov. Bob Riley said in a statement that he hopes the monument's removal is "brief and temporary," with the U.S. Supreme Court ordering it moved back. He said he will file court papers supporting Moore.

7 die in Chicago warehouse shootings

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — The sole survivor of a warehouse shooting that left seven people dead was about to get into his work clothes when a familiar voice spoke to him from behind and gave him a choice.

"Do you want me to tie you up, or do you want to die?" Eduardo Sanchez said he was told. "I said 'Tie me up.' I didn't want to die."

Sanchez recognized the voice Wednesday morning and turned to see Salvador Tapia, 36, a co-worker who had been fired six months earlier. Sanchez, bound and left tied on a ramp, listened as Tapia executed his co-workers at Windy City Core Supply Inc.

Sanchez managed to free himself and get out of the auto parts warehouse to call police. When the first officers arrived at the scene, Tapia shot at them outside the building.

A team of officers followed Tapia back inside, where he ducked behind a box and again fired at police. An officer then shot and killed him, acting Police Superintendent Phil Cline said.

Sanchez said Tapia tied his hands with rope shortly after 8 a.m., led him to a ramp leading to the warehouse basement and tied the rope to a metal rail.

"He said 'I am not going to do anything to you,'" Sanchez said. "He said, 'You haven't done anything to me. I am going to kill all of them. I want to kill everybody.'"

Cline said Tapia had been arrested 12 times, including multiple domestic battery and aggravated assault arrests, dating back to a conviction in 1989 for unlawful use of a weapon.

"I knew he was going to snap. He had anger. I don't know where it was coming from," Julia Camacho, Tapia's girlfriend, said in Thursday editions of the Tribune.

Because he was a convicted felon, Tapia was prohibited from owning a firearm. Investigators were trying to determine how he obtained the weapon used in Wednesday's shooting.

Four of the warehouse workers died at the scene of the shooting; Tapia and two others died at hospitals. Police believe the victims were shot before officers arrived.

The victims identified by the Cook County medical examiner's office included brothers Alan Weiner, 50, of Wilmette, and Howard Weiner, 59, of Northbrook, and Howard's son, Daniel Weiner, 30.

The other victims were identified as Calvin Ramsey, 44, Robert Taylor, 53, and Juan Valles, 34, all of Chicago.

Experts: Chocolate benefits limited

ROANOKE, Va. — After a sweaty health club workout, don't kid yourself that the candy bar in your gym bag is health food. Despite the recent buzz over the confection's heart-protecting qualities, new research suggests that not all kinds of chocolate are beneficial.

European researchers say eating milk chocolate, which is most commonly used in candy bars, does not raise antioxidant levels in the bloodstream. They found the same discouraging result among patients who drank milk while eating dark chocolate.

The results suggest that milk and other dairy products somehow discourage the body's ability to absorb the protective compounds in chocolate. Only subjects who ate dark chocolate showed a temporary increase in their antioxidant levels.

Details of the study appear in Thursday's issue of the journal *Nature*.

"This puts in question the possible protective effects of [chocolate] milk shakes or ice cream or other dairy products," said co-author Alan Crozier of the University of Glasgow.

Nor does Crozier endorse the idea that eating dark chocolate is healthier. It still contains plenty of fat and sugar.

"Don't think by eating five or six bars a day you're doing yourself any good," he said.

From The Associated Press

Bush limits pay raises

WASHINGTON — President Bush, citing the costs of the war on terrorism, has decided to cut the pay raise most federal workers were to receive next year.

In a letter Wednesday to congressional leaders, Bush said he was using his authority to change the pay structure in times of "national emergency or serious economic conditions" to limit raises to 2 percent.

The move affects federal employees covered by the government's general schedule pay system, who were to receive a 2.7 percent across-the-board boost of basic pay and also an increase based on private-sector wages in the areas where they work, called locality pay.

About two-thirds of the government's 1.8 million civilian workers are under the general schedule system.

Bush said granting them the full raises would cost about \$11 billion more than he had proposed in his budget.

"Such cost increases would threaten our efforts against terrorism or force deep cuts in discretionary spending or federal employment to stay within budget," Bush wrote. "Neither outcome is acceptable."

The government faces a record \$480 billion shortfall in 2004, congressional budget analysts said this week.

Bush set the across-the-board raise at 1.5 percent, with the remaining 0.5 percent for locality pay.

Military personnel aren't affected. Bush has proposed a 4.1 percent raise for them starting in January.

Family wins damages

FORT WORTH, Texas — A jury awarded \$35 million to the parents of an 18-year-old who contracted a fatal case of pneumonia at a boot camp.

Bryan Alexander died in January 2001 of a penicillin-resistant form of pneumonia at a Fort Worth hospital, two days after being transported from the probationary camp in suburban Mansfield.

Former camp nurse Knyvett Reyes testified she treated Alexander for a cold, strep throat and flu. Witnesses said Alexander had been coughing up blood for days and Reyes thought he was faking his illness.

Alexander was at the camp for a drunken driving conviction and had no prior criminal record.

Alexander's parents filed the wrongful death lawsuit against Reyes and Correctional Services Corp., the Florida-based company that operated the now-defunct boot camp.

Reyes was convicted last summer of criminally negligent homicide and sentenced to four years' community supervision.

In setting compensatory damages, the jury said Wednesday, Reyes and the company ignored Alexander's pleas for help. Attorneys were expected to present more testimony Thursday to determine punitive damages.

Boot camp officials have previously said Alexander's autopsy showed the facility provided proper care.

Tarrant County's criminal court judges closed the boot camp in July 2001. The teen's parents, Rickey Alexander and Judy Schumpert, are also suing the judges who oversaw the facility, as well as the probation department.

DNA evidence frees inmate

ST. LOUIS — A man who served 17 years in prison for three rapes was freed Monday after DNA tests proved he didn't do it.

Circuit Judge Jimmie Edwards apologized to Lonnie Erby for the wrongful conviction, noting that the science of criminal investigation has improved since 1986.

Erby said of the apology: "That was the one thing I was waiting for."

Erby, 49, was sentenced to 115 years for the 1985 attacks on three girls. He was released after genetic testing found that the semen taken from the victims was not his.

Immediately after being freed, Erby hugged the son he had seen just once since his incarceration.

From wire reports

Liberians plead for help

The Associated Press

MONROVIA, Liberia — Women dressed in white T-shirts symbolizing peace marched on West African peace forces' headquarters in driving rain on Thursday, pleading for faster deployment into Liberia's still-unsettled and starving interior.

The roughly 100 women planned to take their protest next to the U.S. Embassy, where U.S. Sen. John Warner, chairman of the Senate Armed Services committee and a skeptic on greater U.S. military involvement here, was expected.

Surrounding an armored personnel carrier at the high-walled West African compound, the women waved rain-wilted signs with slogans that urged: "Total peace, not half peace," "War ev-

eryday" and "Our sisters in Liberia are dying."

"We're asking them to speedily deploy to the countryside to stop the killing of our people in the bushes," said Leymah Gbowee, 31, a march organizer.

Rebel and government forces signed a peace deal Aug. 18 in their 3-year-old war following the resignation of warlord-president Charles Taylor, who flew into exile in Nigeria.

"I think this is a good thing," said U.S. Marine Maj. Billy McGowan, watching the women singing and chanting in the driving rain. "This shows Liberians are willing to go the extra mile for peace."

McGowan, of Land O Lakes, Fla., is one of a 30-member U.S. liaison team remaining to work with the West African peace force.

The United States pulled its only

fighting force for the mission, a 150-member rapid-reaction team, back to warships off Liberia on Sunday after 11 days.

West African peacekeepers have yet to deploy beyond the Po River ringing the capital, and the countryside beyond remains vastly unstable.

Large numbers of people are on the move from the interior, seeking refuge from what they say are continued clashes.

A trip into the central countryside outside Monrovia on Wednesday revealed thousands of starving refugees, many holding emaciated babies, in flight from what they said the central towns of Gbarnga and Gbatala.

West African peacekeepers say they can spread out nationwide only when their now 1,500-strong, Nigerian-led force builds closer to its intended 3,250-man strength.

Palestinians freeze Islamic charity funds

The Associated Press

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip — The Palestinian Authority has frozen 39 bank accounts of nine Islamic charities in what appeared to be part of U.S.-sought crackdown on Palestinian militants, according to an official document obtained Thursday by The Associated Press.

The Palestinian Authority has been under growing U.S. pressure to take action against militants, including Hamas and Islamic Jihad, after they formally abandoned a unilateral truce last week, following Israel's killing of a Hamas leader in response to a deadly Hamas bus bombing.

Despite U.S. prodding, the Palestinian government has been reluctant to arrest militants and seize their weapons

because of concern about triggering unrest and wrangling between Yasser Arafat and his prime minister, Mahmoud Abbas, over control of security forces.

Palestinian police have sealed tunnels used for smuggling weapons and drugs from Egypt into Gaza. Israel has said it is dissatisfied with the Palestinians' actions and will keep hunting militants until the Palestinian Authority begins dismantling the armed groups as required by the U.S.-backed "road map" peace plan.

The order to shut down the bank accounts was issued by the Palestinian Monetary Authority on Sunday. It came to light Thursday, when hundreds of Palestinians relying on welfare payments from charities tried to pick up their monthly support checks at banks in

Gaza City. Officials in Palestinian Monetary Authority declined comment.

According to a copy of the order obtained by The Associated Press, nine charities are affected: Al Jamiya Al Islamiya, the Islamic Young Women's Association, Al Salah Association, the Social Care Committee, the Palestinian Student Friends Association, the Islamic Charity for Zakat, Al Mujamma Al Islami, Al Nour Charity Association and Al Aqsa Charity Association. The banks were told no money could be withdrawn from the charities' accounts without authorization of the attorney general.

In the past three years of violence, the cash-strapped Palestinian Authority has increasingly stopped providing welfare services. Private charities, including Islamic ones receiving large sums of money from abroad, have filled the void.

N. Korea says it plans to test nuclear weapon

The Associated Press

BEIJING — North Korea told a six-nation conference that it has nuclear weapons and has plans to test one, a U.S. official said Thursday. However, other participants said delegates agreed on the need for a second round of talks.

The remarks by North Korean Deputy Foreign Minister Kim Yong Il set a negative tone at the conference and raised questions about the success of the negotiations, which were scheduled to conclude Friday morning.

Kim at one point accused delegates from Russia and Japan of lying at the instruction of the United States when they tried to point out positive aspects of the American presentation, according to a U.S. official in Washington, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Kim said the North intends to formal-

ly declare it has nuclear weapons, has the ability to deliver them, and intends to conduct a test, the U.S. official said.

The North Korean said his country was maintaining its position because the United States clearly had no intention of abandoning its hostile policy toward North Korea, the official said.

The statements, coming on the second day of a three-day conference, startled the delegates and left the Chinese representative visibly angry, the official said.

Nevertheless, the diplomats agreed on the need to hold more such talks and probably will, a South Korean official said.

The United States, North and South Korea, Russia, Japan and China are trying to balance U.S. demands for an end to North Korea's nuclear program and the communist nation's insistence on a nonaggression treaty with Washington and humanitarian aid.

Shot fired across DMZ

SEOUL, South Korea — A North Korean soldier fired a single shot at a South Korean guard post on Wednesday, breaking a window pane, South Korea said. There were no injuries, and North Korea said it was an accident, the South said.

The North Korean shot hit a South Korean post in the Demilitarized Zone that separates the two Koreas, according to the office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Seoul.

Soon after, North Korean officials telephoned their Southern counterparts and said the incident was a misfire resulting from negligence and that that they had no "hostile intentions," the office said. South Korean soldiers did not return fire.

From The Associated Press

India stampede kills at least 39

NASIK, India — Crowds of Hindu pilgrims waiting to bathe in a holy river in western India surged over a flimsy bamboo fence, triggering a stampede that killed at least 39 people and injured 125.

Worshippers spilled to the ground as the fence collapsed and were trampled by the thousands of others pushing toward the Godavari River outside the town of Nasik, about 110 miles northeast of Bombay. Twenty-six of the dead were women, said Nasik Mayor Dashrath Patil.

"Old women were crying, 'Take me out! Help me,'" said Lalji Mistry, a 35-year-old pilgrim who got away in time. "People, even women, were pushing forward. Due to the weight of the crowd, people started falling down."

Wiping his dust-streaked face with a yellow shawl, Mistry shook his head in disbelief at the crowds that continued to

worship at the Kumbh Mela festival, which spread across 40 square miles.

"Many don't know what's going on. They are still worshipping," said Mistry, a marble craftsman from the western state of Rajasthan.

Worshippers believe they can bathe away their sins in the Godavari River, which is considered holy to many Hindus. Thousands of pilgrims pack shoulder to shoulder in the muddy brown water.

Police in Nasik estimated that nearly 1.6 million people attended the festival Wednesday. About 60 million people are likely to participate at various times during the festival, which started July 30 and ends Monday.

The Kumbh Mela festival is held every 12 years. It is based on the Hindu myth about gods and demons who fought over a pot of nectar that would give them immortality.

From The Associated Press

Citing team chemistry, Bird fires Thomas

BY DAN GELSTON
The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — Larry Bird insisted he took his new job with an open mind about the future of coach Isiah Thomas.

The Indiana Pacers' president of basketball operations needed only seven weeks to come to a decision.

Bird wasted little time in making his first major move, firing Thomas on Wednesday and immediately targeting former assistant Rick Carlisle as his successor.

"I just had a gut feeling this wasn't going to work," Bird said of a surprise move that came only two months before the start of the season.

Bird said he didn't feel comfortable with the Pacers' direction after a second-half swoon that knocked them out of first place in the Eastern Conference and into third.

Bird also said there were other problems with Thomas, who was with the U.S. men's basketball team at the Olympic qualifying tournament in Puerto Rico earlier this week. Thomas returned to Indianapolis on Wednesday.

"I spoke to him one day in a meeting,

and I talked to him one day on the phone. The communication wasn't really there," Bird said.

Carlisle and Bird's relationship dates to the 1980s when the two were teammates with the Boston Celtics. Carlisle also was an assistant for Bird from 1997-2000, but was passed over by current Pacers CEO Donnie Walsh in favor of Thomas.

Carlisle spent the past two seasons as coach of the Detroit Pistons before being fired in May. Carlisle spoke with Bird on Tuesday and said he was interested.

"He's my first choice," Bird said.

Bird said he would have fired Thomas even if Carlisle was not available.

Numerous phone messages were left for Thomas and Carlisle.

Bird and Thomas were contentious rivals from their days of leading the Boston Celtics and Detroit Pistons to NBA titles in the 1980s.

When he was hired July 11, Bird walked off the podium during a news conference and shook hands with Thomas — but neither smiled.

The Pacers were 131-115 in the regular season under Thomas, making the playoffs all three seasons but never advancing past the first round. Specula-

tion swirled toward the end of the season that Thomas would not be back for the final year of his four-year contract.

Walsh, however, said Thomas would return, though they wouldn't discuss an extension. Walsh said on Wednesday he agreed with Bird on the decision to fire Thomas.

Walsh said Thomas would "possibly" have remained on if Bird had not been hired, though he had similar concerns the Pacers wouldn't regroup under Thomas.

"I would have been very worried about going into the season because I would agree that I think that it could blow up early," Walsh said. "And if it did, then we'd be in a worse situation."

The team said it would honor the final year of Thomas' contract.

Bird guided the Pacers to the 2000 NBA Finals and the best three-year record in their NBA history during his time as coach.

Indiana had the best record in the Eastern Conference at the All-Star break this past season, making Thomas the All-Star coach, but went 14-19 the rest of the season and lost in the first round of the playoffs to Boston.

Pacers players had continued to voice support for Thomas.

Jermaine O'Neal, then a free agent,

said before he re-signed with the team last month that he would not play for anybody but Thomas with the Pacers.

"I think he'll be disappointed, but I also think that he'll sit down and talk to us, and we'll have a conversation with him about why it was done," Bird said.

O'Neal, playing with the U.S. team in Puerto Rico, declined comment through a USA Basketball spokesman.

The re-signing of O'Neal and free-agent Reggie Miller, along with the trade of All-Star Brad Miller all fell on Walsh as he eased out of his role as head decision maker.

This one was Bird's.

"I think a new coach coming in is going to bring some freshness, a new style and hopefully he can play the game the way I like it to be played," Bird said.

The biggest criticism of Thomas was his inconsistent rotations. While most players preferred a set role, Thomas made his decisions on his own feelings for a particular game and team matchups.

"Now we have to look at our team and see if we have the chemistry on the team that can win together and work together," Bird said. "This is just starting."

Hewitt topples baseliner from Korea at U.S. Open

BY JANIE MCCAULEY
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Lleyton Hewitt faced a one-set deficit and the possibility of making his earliest U.S. Open exit ever. He was going for too much and missing.

The sixth-seeded Aussie eventually settled down, rallying for a 5-7, 6-2, 6-2, 6-4 victory against aggressive Korean baseliner Lee Hyung-taik in the tournament's second round Thursday.

Hewitt repeatedly yelled "Come on!" and pumped his fists after many points. Once he finally ended it on his fourth match point, Hewitt bent his knees, threw both arms up and screamed. Then, he hit a tennis ball into the seats of Louis Armstrong Stadium.

Hewitt is not the top-seeded player in a Grand Slam for the first time since 2001 Open — but he was seeded fourth that year and wound up winning.

"I was just playing a little bit within myself and not going out and being aggressive," he said. "From the first point in the second set, I started putting more pressure on him. I just say win. For me, sometimes the first few rounds are the toughest."

But, he added: "I'm through to the third round, I can't complain."

In another entertaining match Thursday, unseeded Mary Pierce pulled off an upset of No. 22 Jelena Dokic 6-2, 6-7 (5), 7-6 (5), coming back from a 5-1 deficit in the final set. Pierce, a two-time major winner, won a tiebreaker for the first time this year in six tries.

Dokic, who saved a match point in

the second set, double-faulted 12 times while Pierce hit 70 percent of her first serves and 47 winners.

Thailand's Paradorn Srichaphan, seeded 11th and a fan favorite, defeated Dominik Hrbaty 6-4, 6-4, 6-3 to round cheering from his animated countrymen. Paradorn, who believes he is representing all of Asia, grew up admiring Michael Chang. Paradorn won the title in a tune-up at Long Island last week.

Hewitt has advanced to at least the third round of the Open every year he's played, with his earliest elimination coming in the third round in 1999 when he made his debut at Flushing Meadows.

In other men's action Thursday, No. 33 Juan Ignacio Chela was a 2-6, 6-1, 6-4, 6-3 winner over Tomas Berdych.

On the women's side, 15th-seeded Ai

Sugiyama beat Virginie Razzano 1-6, 6-3, 6-3 to reach the third round.

Lindsay Davenport advanced to the third round Wednesday night with another quick match. She is protecting her troublesome left foot by spending as little time as possible on the court.

Davenport won her first two in just under two hours, dropping only seven games. She didn't dazzle in her 6-2, 6-4 win against Maria Elena Camerin, but it didn't matter.

"I didn't feel it at all today," a cheerful Davenport said. "I think, hopefully, as more days go by, if it doesn't flare up, I'll be more and more confident pushing off it and not really worrying about it."

World No. 1 Kim Clijsters joins the third-seeded Davenport in the third round of the season's final Slam, after overpowering Laura Granville 6-1, 6-1.

HOCKEY

DALLAS — Dallas Stars center Mike Modano signed a one-year contract extension that prevents him from becoming a free agent until the summer of 2005. Modano, the team's career leader in nearly every significant category, will earn \$9 million this season.

TAMPA, Fla. — Center Brad Richards re-signed with the Tampa Bay Lightning, agreeing to a multiyear contract. Financial terms were not disclosed. Richards set career-highs last season

Sports in brief

with 74 points and 57 assists in 80 games.

TRACK AND FIELD

SAINT-DENIS, France — American Tom Pappas won the gold medal in the decathlon at the World Championships and, exhausted, celebrated with a slow victory lap with a U.S. flag draped over

his shoulders.

In the women's 100-meter hurdles, Canada's Perdita Felicien won the gold, Jamaica's Brigitte Foster was second and American Miesha McKelvey took the bronze.

Morocco's Hicham El Guerrouj won the men's 1,500-meter run and Poland's Robert Korzeniowski won gold in the 50-kilometer walk.

Pan American champion Ana Guevara of Mexico won the women's 400-meters. Svetlana Krivelyova of Russia won the women's shot put.

BASKETBALL

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — In its sloppy game of the Olympic qualifying tournament, the U.S. team trailed Mexico at the end of the first quarter, but rallied to win 96-69.

Continued on Page 9

CBS, Garrett reach new deal

Now even salary holdout Brad Garrett can love "Everybody Loves Raymond."

Garrett, who had stayed away from work in a pay dispute, reached a deal with CBS that boosts his salary and gives him a small stake in the comedy's profits, the Hollywood Reporter said Tuesday.

"We've been told Brad is returning to work tomorrow," CBS spokesman Chris Ender said Tuesday. "We look forward to welcoming him back."

Garrett's agency previously had criticized CBS' refusal to discuss a new deal for Garrett, saying his salary was a fraction of that of series star Ray Romano, who's also an executive producer on the show.

Romano, reportedly making about \$1.8 million an episode, said last week he looked forward to Garrett's return in the role of his brother.

"We're a family. Everybody is coming back. We need Brad there," Romano told "Entertainment Tonight."

Faces 'n' places

Garrett, 43, wasn't the only co-star absent from the "Raymond" set. Cast members Patricia Heaton, Peter Boyle and Doris Roberts each had missed at least a day of work.

Bobby Brown gets 9 more jail days

Bobby Brown will serve nine more days in jail after being arrested for allegedly violating his probation from an earlier drunken driving conviction, a judge ruled on Wednesday.

The jail time will be followed by 60 days of house arrest, Dekalb County, Ga., Judge Wayne Purdom decided.

The singer said nothing during the hearing. Afterward, wife Whitney Houston told reporters that she told Brown to "stay strong, baby."

Another Diddy lawsuit

A Queens woman has filed a \$5 million lawsuit against rapper-producer Sean "P. Diddy" Combs, claiming a bouncer at his Manhattan restaurant threw her to the ground and dragged her on the pavement.

Stephanie Grieson said that as she stood outside Justin's on Aug. 22, 2002, having an argument with a friend that became physical, the bouncer grabbed her by the neck and dragged her down the sidewalk, saying: "No fighting in front of this restaurant," The New York Post reported Tuesday.

The lawsuit, filed in Queens Supreme Court, seeks damages to cover lost wages, medical bills, pain and suffering, and future plastic surgery.

Benjamin Brafman, Combs' lawyer, told the Post: "This lady is in for a rude awakening because unlike other superstars, Puffy fights these lawsuits."

From wire reports

White Sox 11, Yankees 2

NEW YORK — Roberto Alomar and Frank Thomas homered in a seven-run fourth inning as Chicago routed David Wells and New York on Wednesday.

Alomar drove in four runs with a two-run homer that capped big rally and had a two-run double in the sixth that chased Wells (12-5), who was charged with a season-high 10 runs.

Bartolo Colon (12-11) struck out a season-high 10, and the AL Central-leading White Sox got 15 hits — including three by Thomas — in winning for the eighth time in nine games.

The Yankees' AL East lead over Boston, which was 7½ games last Thursday, was cut to four. After Thursday's series finale, New York visits Fenway Park for a three-game series.

Red Sox 6, Blue Jays 3

BOSTON — Todd Walker hit a tie-breaking homer in the seventh inning as Boston overcame a three-run deficit for its sixth victory in seven games.

With the score 3-all, Walker connected on an 0-2 pitch from Roy Halladay (17-6) for a two-run homer. David Ortiz added an eighth-inning homer for Boston, which tied the game in the fifth on a three-run homer by Jason Varitek.

Reliever Mike Timlin (6-4) pitched one scoreless inning, and Byung-Hyun Kim got four outs for his 11th save in 14 chances.

Indians 9, Tigers 7

CLEVELAND — Jody Gerut drove in four runs, and Coco Crisp had four hits and scored four runs for Cleveland.

Expos 9, Phillies 6

MONTREAL — Pinch-hitter Joe Vitiello singled home the go-ahead run in the seventh inning as Montreal beat Philadelphia on Wednesday to close within a game of the NL wild-card lead.

Montreal has won four straight overall and eight in a row at home. The Expos led 6-1 in the seventh, but Pat Burrell hit an RBI double and Marlon Byrd tied in the score with his first career grand slam. The homer came against Hector Almonte (1-1), who got his first major league victory.

Endy Chavez hit a two-out double off Dan Plesac (2-1) in the bottom half and Vitiello, hitting for Almonte, lined a single to right for a 7-6 lead. Brian Schneider had a two-run double in the eighth Silva as Philadelphia lost its fifth straight game.

Montreal's Vladimir Guerrero hit his 19th homer and went 3-for-4 with two RBIs. Rocky Biddle got his 31st save.

Astros 6, Dodgers 1

HOUSTON — Jeff Bagwell became the 13th player in major league history to hit 30 or more homers in eight consecutive seasons, and Houston beat Los Angeles.

Houston won its third straight and increased its NL Central lead to one game. Los Angeles has lost four in a row but remained 2½ games back in the crowded NL wild-card race.

Bagwell hit a three-run homer in a four-run first inning off Hideo Nomo (15-10). Wade Miller (11-11) won for the fourth time in five decisions, allowing an unearned run and seven hits in seven innings.

Pirates 4, Marlins 0

PITTSBURGH — Kip Wells and two relievers shut out slumping Florida, and Jason Bay had two key hits in his debut with the Pirates.

Bay, acquired Tuesday from San Diego, doubled with two outs in the second inning off Brad Penny (11-10) and

American League

Detroit hit a season-high five homers — including three off Terry Mulholland in five-run fifth inning — but once again failed to win consecutive road games. The Tigers have not won two straight on the road since June 3-4 at San Diego.

Gerut hit a two-run homer and a two-run double, and Matt Lawton drove in three runs with three singles. Crisp went 4-for-5 in support of reliever Jack Cressend (2-0), who beat Chris Spurling (1-3). David Riske got his fourth save.

Royals 9, Rangers 0

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Rondell White drove in four runs in his first game for Kansas City, and Darrell May pitched a five-hitter.

May (8-6) struck out three and walked one in the Royals' first complete-game shutout since Paul Byrd beat Anaheim 4-0 on July 13, 2002.

White, acquired from San Diego the day before to provide much-needed offensive punch, had a two-run single in the four-run first inning off Colby Lewis (6-9).

Devil Rays 8, Mariners 4

SEATTLE — Travis Lee hit a two-run homer, and Julio Lugo and Aubrey Huff later added solo shots on consecutive pitches as Tampa Bay beat slumping Seattle.

Seattle fell a game behind Oakland in the AL West. It's the first time since

April 14 the Mariners, who have one victory in the past eight games, haven't held a share of first place.

Tampa Bay stopped a six-game losing streak as Doug Waechter won in his major league debut. Joel Pineiro (13-10) lost his fifth straight decision.

Angels 5, Twins 4

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Scott Spiezio hit a tiebreaking home run in the seventh inning and Bengie Molina also connected as Anaheim beat Minnesota.

The loss, coupled with victories by Chicago and Kansas City, left the defending AL Central champions 2½ games behind the White Sox and 1½ behind the second-place Royals.

Ben Weber (4-1) pitched 1½ innings for the victory, and Troy Percival got three outs for his 28th save in 30 chances. Juan Rincon (3-6), who replaced Kenny Rogers with two outs in the sixth, retired the first two batters in the seventh before Spiezio drove a 1-2 pitch to right field for his 13th homer and a 5-4 lead.

Athletics 6, Orioles 2

OAKLAND, Calif. — Miguel Tejada hit two homers and Barry Zito pitched eight innings of four-hit ball as Oakland won its fifth straight game.

Zito (11-11) retired 19 of his first 21 batters, taking a two-hitter into the eighth. Tejada hit a solo homer in the second and a two-run shot in the fifth off Pat Hentgen (5-7).

Eric Chavez also homered for the A's, who got their ninth victory in 11 games.

From The Associated Press

National League

scored on Jose Hernandez's double. Bay's run-scoring single finished a three-run third that made it 4-0.

Wells (6-7) struck out seven and walked two.

Cardinals 4, Cubs 2

ST. LOUIS — Kerry Wood struck out 11 in seven shutout innings for Chicago, but St. Louis rallied to win.

Tino Martinez hit a tying, two-run single and the Cardinals went in front on Kyle Farnsworth's wild pitch in a four-run eighth.

Sammy Sosa drove in both runs for Chicago, 5-24 at Busch Stadium since the start of the 2000 season.

Farnsworth (3-1) walked Scott Rolen to load the bases before Martinez singled on a 1-1 pitch to tie the game. Then Farnsworth made the wild pitch to Edgar Renteria.

Steve Kline (5-5) won and Jason Isringhausen got the save.

Brewers 6, Reds 2

CINCINNATI — Scott Podsednik drove in three runs as Milwaukee won its ninth straight game.

The Brewers' winning streak is their longest since a nine-game string in 1997, when they were still in the American League.

Milwaukee has not won 10 in a row since 1988.

The Reds lost their fourth in a row. Milwaukee will try Thursday for its first-ever four-game sweep in Cincinnati.

Podsednik extended his hitting streak to a career-high 12 games in support of Wayne Franklin (10-10). Seth Etherton (1-2) took the loss.

Braves 4, Mets 1

ATLANTA — Greg Maddux earned his 286th victory, and Chipper Jones drove

Scores/standings

American League

	East Division			GB
	W	L	Pct	
New York	80	51	.611	
Boston	77	56	.579	4
Toronto	65	68	.489	16
Baltimore	61	71	.462	19½
Tampa Bay	52	79	.397	28

	Central Division			GB
	W	L	Pct	
Chicago	71	62	.534	—
Kansas City	69	62	.527	1
Minnesota	68	64	.515	2½
Cleveland	59	74	.444	12
Detroit	33	98	.252	37

	West Division			GB
	W	L	Pct	
Oakland	78	55	.586	—
Seattle	77	56	.579	1
Anaheim	64	69	.481	14
Texas	61	72	.459	17

Wednesday's games
 Boston 6, Toronto 3
 Cleveland 9, Detroit 7
 Chicago White Sox 11, N.Y. Yankees 2
 Kansas City 9, Texas 0
 Anaheim 5, Minnesota 4
 Tampa Bay 8, Seattle 4
 Oakland 6, Baltimore 2

National League

	East Division			GB
	W	L	Pct	
Atlanta	85	47	.644	—
Florida	70	62	.530	15
Philadelphia	70	62	.530	15
Montreal	70	64	.522	16
New York	58	73	.443	26½

	Central Division			GB
	W	L	Pct	
Houston	70	62	.530	—
St. Louis	69	63	.523	1
Chicago	68	63	.519	1½
Pittsburgh	60	70	.462	9
Cincinnati	58	74	.439	12
Milwaukee	57	75	.432	13

	West Division			GB
	W	L	Pct	
San Francisco	80	51	.611	—
Arizona	69	64	.519	12
Los Angeles	67	64	.511	13
Colorado	64	71	.474	18
San Diego	53	81	.396	28½

Wednesday's games
 Atlanta 4, N.Y. Mets 1
 Pittsburgh 4, Florida 0
 Montreal 9, Philadelphia 6
 St. Louis 4, Chicago Cubs 2
 Milwaukee 6, Cincinnati 2
 Houston 6, Los Angeles 1
 San Francisco 6, Colorado 4
 San Diego 10, Arizona 2

From The Associated Press

Sports in brief continued

Continued from Page 8

The Americans are undefeated in the tournament and have clinched a spot in the semifinals, along with Canada and Puerto Rico. The top three finishers advance to the Olympics in 2004.

MIAMI — Lamar Odom officially joined the Miami Heat, signing a six-year, \$65 million contract after the Los Angeles Clippers declined to match the offer.

SOCCER

MADRID, Spain — David Beckham scored in his home debut for Real Madrid, a 3-0 victory over Mallorca in the Spanish Super Cup.

Beckham, acquired in June from Manchester United, got Real Madrid's third goal in the 73rd minute when he headed in a cross from Ronaldo. Real Madrid won the two-leg series on 4-2 aggregate.

HELSINKI, Finland — Spain and Brazil won semifinal games to reach the final of the FIFA Under-17 World Soccer Championships.

Spain edged Argentina 3-2 and Brazil downed Colombia 2-0 in the first semifinal at Tampere.

From The Associated Press

From The Associated Press